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Senate Report on Cuba Is Less Than Helpful

UNDERNEATH all the rhetoric of the Senate Preparedness subcommittee's report on Cuba there is little substance that is new, and nothing that is constructive about the central problem of what to do about Cuba.

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The report was apparently written to satisfy both sides of a bipartisan subcommittee. While it re-raked accusations which have been made by Senators Keating, Goldwater and Thurmond, it does serve to reject some of the charges raised over Cuba, such as the charge there was conflict between CIA and the Strategic Air Command over aerial reconnaissance.

While being critical of intelligence agencies, the subcommittee also gave them a mild pat for performing creditably in some areas. Some of the criticism is unfairly directed. For instance, the subcommittee rapped the intelligence community for "an apparent tendency to discredit or downgrade refugee and exile reports."

It should be clear to members of the committee by this time that Cuban refugees and exiles generally see no other way to free Cuba than by means of a United States invasion. With that in mind, the intelligence community seems wise to take reports from exiles with at least a grain of salt.

The subcommittee went to some length in telling about jet fighters, air to air missiles, and other short range armament which has been publicized long before. It also stated matter-of-factly that low-level air surveil-

lance of Cuba has been discontinued. The Defense Department disputes this.

Then the subcommittee went the route of raising old apprehensions about missiles in caves. But it ended up with this statement: "Strategic weapons may or may not now be in Cuba. We can reach no conclusion because of the lack of conclusive evidence."

In essence the subcommittee is no wiser than anyone else, and if it has gained access to Senator Keating's mysterious sources, it clearly doesn't consider them in any way conclusive.

The subcommittee spoke of on-site inspections, but it made no mention of how it recommends that these be achieved. In fact, the subcommittee has no ideas about dealing with Cuba beyond what is being done already.

It did not suggest the U.S. go to war with Cuba, nor did it offer any detailed suggestion of how to rid Cuba of Castro. It did assert that the nation must maintain alert vigilance, which is what it has been doing and what it continues to do.

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The subcommittee is very much like the Indian who came upon a trapper who had found a skunk in his trap. The Indian criticized the trapper for the location of the trap, warned that the skunk might have hydrophobia in addition to scent, but concluded by saying that leaving the animal there was unthinkable.

The trapper's reply was that he knew all that, but it wasn't the answer to his problem.